

Bright lights from 2002



GBC Open House

More than 2,200 prospective students, family members and teachers visited the first ever George Brown Open House on November 9, 2002. Visitors had a chance to tour the campuses, see demonstrations, talk to staff members and gain first hand experience of life at George Brown.

Cuisinart supports Chefs School

Cuisinart and the George Brown College Foundation entered a new partnership agreement with the Chefs School in 2002. Cuisinart donates equipment, provides ongoing discounts on materials and is awarding a \$1500 annual student award for three years.

Applied Degrees

In 2002, Ontario's Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, Dianne Cunningham awarded George Brown the right to grant three new applied degrees: The Bachelor of Applied Technology degree (Construction & Environment; Compliance & Regulations); the Bachelor of Applied Business degree in Hospitality Operations Management; and the Bachelor of Applied Business: Financial Services. The first intake for the new degree programs will be September 2003.

Siemens signs landmark deal with Faculty of Technology

Early in 2002, the George Brown Faculty of Technology and Siemens signed a landmark partnership agreement that will bring more than \$3 million worth of equipment, training and marketing support to the college.

As part of the agreement, Siemens is committed to supply automated electronics manufacturing equipment to the Technology Centre's new lab facility for three years.



GBC grads grab Premier's Award three years running

George Brown graduate and former Student Associate President Kevin King was named the recipient of the Premier's Award for the Recent Graduate Category. This is the third year in a row that a George Brown graduate has received the Premier's Award. Dr. Anthony Brissett, a former Health Sciences student and specialist in head and neck surgery at the world renowned Mayo Clinic, won in 2001 for the Health Sciences Category. Paul Rowan, Graphic Design graduate and Co-founder and Vice-President of Umbra Ltd. won the 2000 Applied Arts Award: Creative Arts & Design.



The Institute without Boundaries

The George Brown School of Design and Bruce Mau Design entered into the first Canadian college post-graduate design program to combine a public/private model of education, called The Institute without Boundaries. Shown in photo at the official launch are (l to r): Greg Van Alstyne, Team Leader and Bruce Mau of Bruce Mau Design, with Paul Carder former Dean of Business and Creative Arts, and Luigi Ferrara, Director of the School of Design.



Technology in the City

George Brown held its first Technology in the City event in 2002. More than 220 students, administrators, government representatives, business partners and other invited guests, including Michael Dell, Chairman and CEO of Dell Computers, visited the Casa Loma campus to take part in the day's activities that included competitions, demonstrations and facilities tours.

Mental Health Day Forum

Redirection Through Education (RTE) and George Brown College Training Services partnered to present the 4th Annual World Mental Health Day Forum. Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, The Honourable James K. Bartleman (shown below with Frank Soroichinsky) delivered the opening address at the event, which included presentations from leading educators and industry professionals.



Toronto Forum

More than 200 business, political and community leaders arrived at George Brown last May to attend "The Toronto Forum at The City College" – an evening with Toronto's brightest minds and greatest chefs". The event drew representatives from Toronto's key sectors, including financial services, community services, health-care, hospitality, performing arts, fashion and technology, as well as all levels of government.



The Student Life Cycle Project

In the summer of 2002, a cross-college team representing different constituencies, faculties, staff positions and student interests were brought together for the Student Life Cycle Project. The team's task was to examine services being delivered to students and provide recommendations on improvements.

The 14-week project entailed the following:

- Looking at current services by interviewing individuals providing service to students, from front line personnel to management.
- Conducting two day-long workshops to map each process that a student comes in contact with, from inquiry through application and admission registration to attending classes and interacting with the facilities and services within the college.
- Conducting nine hours of focus groups with students to find out their experiences with George Brown and their recommendations.
- Surveying 200 students on both campuses to verify the group findings in larger numbers.
- Developing a report for management.
- Designing a plan to address the issues identified by staff, students and managers based on the project findings.

Brenda Pipitone of the SLC team says the findings of the project team in the initial stages indicate that students and staff are unhappy with the level of student services. "It wasn't a case of not caring or being burned out on the job. A lot of positive, enthusiastic people simply felt they were unable to deliver the services they wanted to."

She adds that this study is different from previous projects since it focuses on the need from the students' point of view. "We did this with their perspective in mind."

One positive aspect of the project she says is that despite the student's unhappiness with the services, "Most – in fact 90% – said they liked being a student at George Brown. They want to be here. They just want it to be different."

Student Life Cycle recommendations – major components

Information/Data (content, process, delivery)

- Information repository – consolidated, organized, maintained, easily accessible, databases of student information
- Student relationship management – software tool for front-line staff access and provision of student information
- Web-based services (eg. gbctoday.ca) communication and service, software tool for faculty, support staff and students
- Expanded Call Centre service – provides online/remote help for students
- Document management – process and technology to reduce paper, organize and makes readily accessible the paper we use

Student Service Centre

- 'One-stop shopping' integrating services
- Work flow management process and technology to manage flow of work in SLC

Human Resources

- Customer oriented, empowerment tools, organizations, superior training and recognition

Self-Service Transactions

- Web and telephone-based tools

Scheduling

- Co-ordinate the scheduling of courses/programs, faculties and classrooms

IT Infrastructure

- The basic 'plumbing' of Information Technology required for systems functioning and expanding

Project Management Governance

- Continues the work of the SLC Team, sets priorities, develops implementation plans for projects, steers implementation, insures timely and helpful communications and helps manage change

Communications

- Create superior communications model that can be demonstrated early during implementation phase and broadened to become college's overall communication practice

city college news

Bringing the vision to reality

by **Frank Sorochinsky**
President

The vision we hold for our college is that of Toronto's city college – woven into the economic and social fabric of the city and city-region.

With core values of student success and academic excellence, we help prepare our students for their careers and their place as citizens in the broader community. We help prepare them to go out and make a difference. A difference that helps ensure the city's economic success and social well-being.

The college's key strategic objectives over the next two years are:

- Positioning George Brown as Toronto's city college
- Maintaining financial viability
- Ensuring staff success
- Supporting student success

All faculties and departments have objectives and plans covering these four key areas and the work of faculty, support staff and administrators across the college should be in support of these objectives. As we go forward we will be using a Balanced Scorecard approach (goal setting and measurement) to ensure that our efforts are aligned and integrated, and to measure our progress.

The college's Management Committee will be focused on these four strategic objectives. The nature of the work of our five Deans – Joy McKinnon, John Walker, Lorie Shketer-Wolfson, Maureen Loweth and Colin Simpson – entails all four objectives. The work of the Chief Information Officer,

Yves Hebert, will underpin all these objectives.

Management Committee leadership of each of the four objectives is as follows:

Pam Royle, Vice-President, Strategic Positioning, will provide leadership for the positioning objective; Eugene Harrigan, Vice-President, Corporate Services for the financial viability objective; Nancy Hood, Executive Director of Human Resources for the staff success objective; and Michael Cooke, Vice-President of Academic Excellence and Student Success for the student success objective. Susan Stylianos, Executive Director of Student Affairs and John Hardy, Director of Educational Resources will report to Michael Cooke in his new capacity.

An important part of our ongoing commitment to student success will be our response to the recommendations of the Student Life Cycle Initiative (SLCI). The Student Life Cycle Report, "Student Services Revitalization", released in December, strongly informs our direction regarding student service.

In my mind, the SLCI



George Brown Chief Information Officer Yves Hebert will be co-chairing the Student Life Cycle Implementation Steering Committee.



On May 14, 2002, George Brown hosted The Toronto Forum at the City College – an event that attracted some of the brightest minds in Toronto from the arts, business, government and educational sectors. Frank Sorochinsky is shown at the event with designer Bruce Mau.

report has several important characteristics. It makes the point that a student service vision must be inherent in the college's overall vision. It attempts to view student services through the eyes of the student. It strongly recommends a holistic approach. It recognizes that improving student services in a quantum way will be a long term effort – a journey. And that there can be satisfaction for students and for staff along the way.

Michael Cooke will serve as Management Committee sponsor for the implementation phase of this crucial student service initiative. Michael and Yves Hebert will serve as co-chairs of the Implementation Steering Committee. The implementation team will have three full-time leaders. First there is Brenda Pipitone, who prior to assuming this role, was a faculty member and co-ordinator in the Faculty of Community Services and Health Sciences. Brenda was also a member of the Student Life Cycle Initiative team and brings continuity to the implementation phase. Wayne Poirier will

join Brenda as an implementation team leader. Wayne has served as Executive Director of the Student Association and will bring with him a valuable student service perspective. A third team leader, with strong project management skills, will be added very shortly.

The implementation team will develop detailed implementation plans and provide leadership and critical project management for the many Student Life Cycle projects over the next two years. No later than February 2003, look for the beginning of a comprehensive communication effort that will inform and invite participation from many across the College.

2003 will be an exciting year. A year when our new facilities come on line; a year when we will experience the impact of the "double-cohort"; and another year when we will have the opportunity to make a significant difference in the lives of our students and the communities we serve. I very much look forward to working with you to do just that!

Positioning for success

by Pam Royl

Vice-President, Strategic Positioning

The positioning of George Brown is an integral part of our vision of the role we play as Toronto's city college. This designation goes well beyond our geographical place in Toronto. It is an all-encompassing concept that characterizes many things, such as our relationships with sectors that impact our economic success and social well being; how we integrate with the city's influencing bodies; our relationships with educational institutions at all levels; and our relationships with municipal, provincial and federal governments; and our relationship with current, past and future students.

In simple terms, positioning is how we are perceived and valued both within and outside the college. This will become an increasingly important issue as the college system as a whole undergoes

significant change. The value we bring will have an impact on what we can offer, the quality of the students and staff we attract and our role within the educational community at large.

We must clearly differentiate ourselves as a college that has a vision and strategic direction that is linked to the most culturally diverse urban centre in the world. There's a long list of things we can do. Much of our positioning work will involve developing connections with various institutions, organizations and events that play an integral role in the city's economic and social development. One example of many is the recent involvement of Frank Sorochinsky and Kevin King (last year's Student Association President and Premier's Award winner) with the Toronto City Summit



On March 28, 2003, Pam Royl (second from left) along with members of the George Brown Marketing and Mail Room staff celebrated the timely delivery of 11,000 offer letters to prospective students – almost double the offers that were sent on the same date in 2001. The feat was accomplished as a result of a new Admission Review Project that drew upon the resources of team members from the Registrar's Office, the IT Department, the Assessment Centre, the Academic Divisions, Marketing and Communications, and Facilities Management. She is joined at the momentous event by (l to r) Barry Hemmerling, Ray Tibando, Sharon Kinaz, Yasmin Walli, Ernie Reid, Jeff Bondy and Aleem Esmail.

Alliance, a group of 36 community leaders that is committed to building Toronto's future.

Our Centres, which are closely aligned to selected sectors within Toronto, are the critical component to our positioning strategy. We will become known as specialists in essential Toronto economic

and social drivers, developing 'intellectual capital' as an asset for the college. This will be an important distinction for us as we evolve and work with governments in defining our strategic direction, for fundraising, attracting students and diversifying our delivery modes

As part of the positioning
(continued on page 4)



Above: On October 23, 2002, Faculty of Community and Health Sciences Chair Patricia Chorney-Rubin and Eugene Harrigan were among the hundreds of guests who attended the college-wide Mission Possible event at the Paramount Theatre. There the audience heard about the college's successes as it progresses toward Vision 2003, and the challenges and opportunities that are still in store, as well as had a sneak preview of the Student Life Cycle project.

Right: On October 30, 2003, the official opening of the Sally Horsfall Eaton Centre for Studies in Community Health, a joint initiative with Ryerson University, marked the near completion of the first of three George Brown SuperBuild projects funded by the Government of Ontario and the private sector.



Financial viability

by Eugene Harrigan

Vice-President, Corporate Services

A broad mission requires multiple perspectives. This means looking through a number of lenses which, when combined, can bring the total picture into focus. Financial viability is one of those lenses.

If we are to deliver on our positioning, our staff success

and our student success initiatives, then it stands to reason that we must have the financial strength to support them. And while attaining financial viability is not an end to itself, it is a means by which we can move forward with these initiatives and continue to support them as they evolve.

Most who have spent a number of years with the college will remember that we went through some financially challenging times during the mid 1990s. In fact, since 1990, operating grant per capita funding has been reduced by 40 per cent. Today the grant per capita funding ranks as the lowest of any region in Canada. Like many other educational institutions, our dependence on government funding left us vulnerable to

Student success

by Michael Cooke

Vice-President, Academic Excellence and Student Success

Academic excellence and student success – these are our core values. This fall, our president has repeatedly underscored the need to judge everything we do in relation to these core values.

During my tenure as Vice-President, Academic Excellence and Innovation, I have focused my attention on making good on our commitment to academic excellence. This focus has included a comprehensive review of our academic policies, major new investments in faculty development in partnership with the Staff Resource Centre, renewal of college-wide program review, development of our capability for institutional research and support for many new diploma and degree programs as well as applied research. This work is never done,

but I think we can point to concrete and meaningful progress.

Recently, our President announced a change in my title: Vice-President, Academic Excellence and Student Success. Along with the new title, he asked me to take responsibility for Student Affairs, Educational Resources and, with Yves Hebert our Chief Information Officer, for the implementation of the Student Life Cycle Initiative.

There are four key components to our task:

- *The development of a common information repository* – Our goal is to ensure that all the information a student might want or need – from academic status and grades to financial assistance and account information – is fully integrated and easily accessible. Data on disparate

change. When that change happened, we had to make some difficult adjustments.

We've learned our lesson and have since spent our time ensuring that we will not be subject to that kind of dependence again. We have learned to be vigilant in growing our revenues through alternative sources, building a more balanced revenue portfolio and reducing our costs.

Today George Brown is in a relatively strong financial position. We have a positive cash flow, are debt-free and enjoy financial reserves – a position that allows us to support investment in our people and our services.

This financial strength is a catalyst that will enable us to continue to do what we need to do to be a leader in the college community. We must – and will – remain financially solvent to support our Student Life Cycle initiative, applied degree programs, extended research, new business ventures,

improved facilities and programs, training and staff support and much more.

There is no question that in these times of fiscal restraint, colleges are compelled to become more business-like in their financial endeavours. To that end, some of the key areas where we will be concentrating our efforts over the next few years include:

- Growing and maintaining an internationalization strategy. (We have already doubled our international programs and will continue to pursue more opportunities).
- Ensure that our SuperBuild projects are complete on time, on scope and on budget.
- Explore differentiated tuition for key high demand programs.
- Put measures in place to ensure that our cost structure remains under control.

It's all about how we can remain financially strong so we can deliver best-of-class services to our students, our staff and all our stakeholders.



The people have spoken. For three years running George Brown has been the Gold Medal Winner in The Toronto Sun Readers' Choice Awards for the Colleges and Universities category. Michael Cooke is shown here with Veronica Williams, The Toronto Sun Vice-President of Advertising accepting the award for 2003.

systems must be able to speak to each other, which means creating an infrastructure and common body of information for students.

- *Easy access to services and information* – Whether they phone, use email or come into the college, students should be able to find everything in one place or through one single point of contact. To enable this, we will create student centres at each campus location and a single contact number for students to get any information, service and support they need.
- *Staff support* – In order to achieve the first two objectives, staff will develop new ways of doing their work. They will need improved equipment and more training. We will be working closely with Nancy Hood, Bob Cox and the Human Resources team to deliver this component of the task.
- *Policy and procedure development* – In the long term, clear policies and procedures are essential to ensure consistency and continuity in what we deliver.

We know that people will be looking for early, tangible results. It would be tempting to rush out and implement

some of the recommendations right away. However, if we don't take time to lay a solid foundation, the whole enterprise will quickly crumble.

So we have to manage expectations and build involvement of more and more staff over the coming months. At the same time, we need to stay focused on the essentials. Otherwise the scope and the cost of the work will mushroom beyond our ability to deliver.

Most importantly, we have to communicate, communicate, communicate. Everyone needs to know what's going on and needs an opportunity to give input. That's not easy given our geography and our habits. In my new leadership role, I'm going to give special attention to this dimension of the task.

Oh yes – I have a new office to go with my new title. In January, I am moving from my current location at 200 King to 160 Kendal. It's a good way to help me look at my new job from a fresh perspective. And it will give me a much better opportunity to benefit from the advice and wisdom of staff members based at Casa Loma. Anyone interested in helping me move some boxes?

Staff success supports core values

by **Nancy Hood**
Executive Director, Human Resources

Each and every member of our staff has an important part to play in achieving our strategic goals – from the individual working at the Student Services counter to the professors who work with the students, to the staff who develop the programs, manage the systems, work in our daycares or perform many of the different functions at the college. Although our core values are academic excellence and student success, neither of these can be met without staff success and ensuring that every employee has a meaningful job and is recognized for excellent performance. Human Resources is playing a lead role in supporting the Staff Success initiative, by working cooperatively in partnership with line management to ensure that we meet the divisions' and the college's goals and objectives.

We have developed an aggressive business plan for 2003 and onwards that covers all areas of Human Resources, including: Planning, Recruitment and Selection, Compensation and Benefits, Labour Relations, Performance Management, Staff Development, HR Management and the HR function, Occupational Health and Safety, College Culture, and Employee



Nancy Hood (left) with Pam Royl.

Rewards and Recognition.

To date, we have prioritized key items for the next fiscal year. These are:

- **Human Resources Planning** – This means having "the right number of the right people at the right time". Initial plans being developed by line managers with HR will be ready by mid to late February in order to start the necessary recruitment for September 2003.
- **Recruitment and Selection** – Our goal is to implement effective recruitment processes to attract and retain excellent staff and raise the profile of the college as an employer of choice. Key initiatives include the development of an HR web site, and a large area recruitment ad to run in April and May in the Toronto Star. We will also

be providing recruitment training for managers and people involved in the selection and interview process.

- **Labour Relations** – Our plan is to improve the labour relations climate with both bargaining units during the time of collective bargaining and over the longer term. This entails ensuring timely responses to grievances, providing input to the bargaining process and training of and communication to management staff.
- **Performance Management** – We wish to set an overall environment of continuous learning and improvement, provide meaningful feedback by integrating performance feedback mechanisms with the planning cycle, and encourage employee recognition and reward.

- **Staff Development** – This is key to retention, facilitating performance management and ensuring staff success. Plans are being made to develop customized programs for each employee group depending on the training and professional development needs. These will include new employee orientation, curriculum development training, computer training and leadership development.

While we have identified our priorities and initiated plans, please remember that we are in the early stages of planning and this is a work in progress. Plans may be subject to change as they evolve. One thing however will not change – and that is the importance of the role that staff success will play in helping us achieve our goals.



On March 1, 2002, faculty and staff had the opportunity to find their own rhythm at Vision 2003: Ramping Up For Success. The one-day event offered presentations from community, business and educational leaders, as well as a chance to take part in a variety of workshops and seminars. It was a unique opportunity for everyone at George Brown to listen and learn together.

Positioning for success *(continued from page 2)*

work we will be adopting a more systemic approach to diversity, integrating access and accelerating success for new immigrants. These are areas we must excel in to claim the title of the college.

We are now in the process of forming a cross-college project team to lead the positioning work, as well as an external advisory team to provide us with continuous external perspective. We will be

conducting extensive research with key stakeholders and redefining our college identity.

The positioning work is expected to evolve over the next two years and will be closely linked with the other key strategies of student and staff success and financial viability. The end result will be an unshakable identity that will be synonymous with employment and education in Toronto.

city college news

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